# Text Complexity Analysis Worksheet Guidance Document

Purpose

This document serves as a tool to assist teachers in selecting texts that are supportive of established learning objectives for lessons and units. The process of text analysis is meant to be collaborative, where groups of teachers work together rather than in isolation. Similar to the experience using the 6-Trait Writing Rubric, it is expected that over time, inter-rater reliability will be established among groups that engage in this work.

Three Part Model of Text Complexity

The Common Core Standards introduce a three-part model for measuring text complexity. Teachers need to use their professional judgment as they draw on information from all three sources when determining the complexity of text.

1. **Quantitative measures** – readability such as: word difficulty, sentence length and syntax, and text cohesion (grammatical links with a text or sentence) best measured by computer software.
2. **Qualitative measures** – levels of meaning, structure language conventionality and clarity, and knowledge demands often best measured by an attentive human reader (see examples on the next page).
3. **Reader and Task considerations** professional judgment based on:

   - **The teacher's knowledge of students as readers**
   - **The teacher's understanding of text complexity**
   - **The teacher's ability to use instructional supports/scaffolds** *For example, a close read, a graphic organizer, multiple opportunities to read and discuss*
   - **The teacher's consideration of matching the text to the task the students are expected to complete, a teacher may ask, "Does this text lend itself to the expected task?"** *For example, purpose for reading: to gain knowledge, skim for information, identify text structure, compare and contrast across texts*

Teacher support increases with the complexity of the text
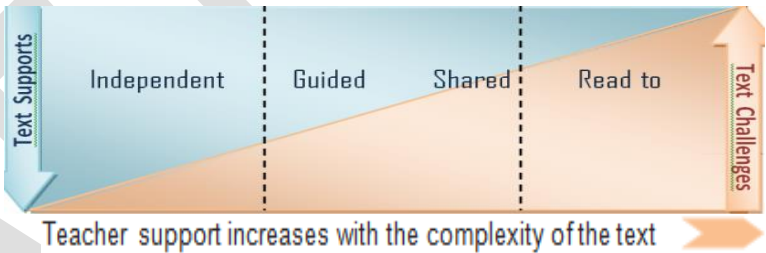
Balancing the supports and the challenges
The more complex the text, the more support students will need. Students should be introduced to increasingly complex texts through middle school and high school. This is done through a gradual release of responsibility where complex texts are introduced in a supportive context that facilitates higher levels of independence.

Directions

1. Determine the **Quantitative** measure of the selected text, noting that a book/text may fit into a few different grade bands.
2. Carefully compare the **Qualitative criteria** and **descriptors** on the Text Complexity Analysis Worksheet with selected text.
3. Place an X in the appropriate column for each criteria listed. Utilize the **Notes** column to support decisions.
4. After considering each of the criteria, notice where the majority of the X's occurred. Determine if the text is **Readily Accessible**, **Moderately Accessible** or **Very Complex.**
5. Apply the **Reader and Task considerations**.   Determine which grade band is most appropriate for the selected text when considering what students **should** be able to do.
6. With the understanding that text complexity is important and students should continually be exposed to increasingly complex text, determine which sections or passages may be difficult for students.
   Consider the **instructional supports or scaffolds** that might be necessary for students when they are first exposed to complex texts.

Example of Text Complexity, Literary
The Book Thief by Markus Zusak

-Of course, an introduction.

A beginning.

Where are many manners?
I could introduce myself properly, but it's not really necessary.
==You will know me well enough and soon enough, depending on a diverse range of variables.==
It suffices to say that at some point in time, I will be standing over you, as genially as possible.
Your soul will be in my arms.
==A color will be perched on my shoulder.==
I will carry you gently away.

At that moment, you will be lying there
==(I rarely find people standing up).==
You will be caked in your own body.
There might be a discovery, ==a scream will dribble down== the air.
The only sound I'll hear after that will be my own breathing, and the sound of the smell, of my footsteps.

The question is, what color will everything be at that moment when I come for you? What will the sky by saying?

Personally, I like a chocolate-colored sky.
Dark, dark chocolate. People will say it suits me.
I do, however, try to enjoy every color I see the whole spectrum.
A billion or so flavors, none of them quite the same, and a sky to slowly suck on. It takes the edge of the stress. It helps me relax.

A Small Theory
==People observe the colors of day only at its beginning and ends. But to me it's quite clear that a day merges through a multitude of shades and intonations, with each passing moment. A single hour can consist of thousands of different colors. Waxy yellows, cloud-spat blues. Murky darkness.==

==In my own line of work, I make it a point to notice them.==

[callout] Narrator is not identified until part way through the text.

[callout] Figurative Language

[callout] Personification reference to death

[callout] Figurative Language

[callout] Innovative stylistic techniques are used. The narrator's use of bold print to rely information

Exemplar Text for Grades 9-10 730 Lexile

Students are likely to find the following characteristics challenging
- Historical Setting
- Extensive use of Figurative Language
- Stylistic Technique
- Intertwining, multiple themes
- 552 pages

The Amateur Scientist

Thinking about physics while scared to death (on a falling roller coaster) by Jearl Walker

The rides in an amusement park not only are fun but also demonstrate principles of physics. Among them are rotational dynamics and energy conservation. I have been exploring the rides at Geauga Lake Amusement Park near Cleveland and have found that nearly every ride offers a memorable lesson.
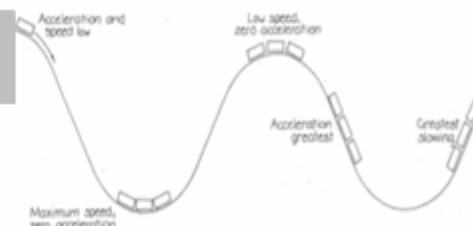
To me the scariest rides at the park are the roller coasters. The Big Dipper is similar to many of the roller coasters that have thrilled passengers for most of this century. The cars are pulled by chain to the top of the highest hill along rack. Released from the chain as the front car begins its descent, the unpowered cars have almost no speed and only a small acceleration. As more cars get onto the downward slope the acceleration increases. It peaks when all the cars are headed downward. The peak value is the product of the acceleration generated by gravity and the sine of the slope of the track. A steeper descent generates a greater acceleration, but packing the coaster with heavier passengers does not.

When the coaster reaches the bottom of the valley and starts up the next hill, there is an instant when the cards are symmetrically distributed in the valley. The acceleration is zero. As more cars ascend, the coaster begins to slow, reaching its lowest speed just as it is symmetrically positioned at the top of the hill.

A roller coaster functions by means of transfer of energy. ==When the chain hauls the cars to the top of the first hill, it does work on the cars, endowing them with gravitational potential energy, the energy of a body in a gravitational field with respect to the distance of the body from some reference level such as the ground.== As the cars descend into the first valley much of the stored energy is transferred into kinetic energy, the energy of motion.

[callout] Challenging abstract

[callout] Nominalization

[callout] Many complex sentences with phrases and clauses

[callout] Domain-Specific Vocabulary

Exemplar Text for Grades 9-10 Text Complexity Band
Flesch-Kincaid: 8th grade

Students are likely to find the following challenging:
- **Domain-Specific vocabulary**
- **Knowledge demands of physics and motion and force**
- **Small, densely packed print**
- **Nominalization**
- **Little or no use of diagrams to illustrate directions of forces**